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**ABEN-HAMET,**  
**THE LAST OF**  
**THE ABENCERAGES.**



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LONDON :  
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CHATEAUBRIAND.

ABEN-HAMET, *S.H. 1827.*

THE LAST OF

THE ABENCERAGES;

A Romance,

*By the Viscount de Chateaubriand.*



TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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LONDON:

TREUTTEL AND WÜRTZ, TREUTTEL JUN.,  
AND RICHTER, 30, SOHO SQUARE.

—  
1826.

114.



To

SIR WALTER SCOTT,

*in Testimony of*

*admiration*

*of his transcendent genius,*

*and of*

*respect and veneration for*

*his private virtues,*

*this little Volume is inscribed*

*By the Translator.*



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE *Adventures of the last Abencerage* were written nearly twenty years ago ; the portrait, which I have sketched of the Spaniards, explains sufficiently why this romance could not be printed under the Imperial government. The resistance of the Spaniards to Buonaparte, of a defenceless nation to the conqueror, who had vanquished the best soldiers of Europe, excited at



## VIII

that time the enthusiasm of every heart, susceptible of being affected by great devotedness and noble sacrifices. The ruins of Saragossa were still smoking, and the censorship would not have suffered the publication of eulogiums, in which it would have discovered, rightly enough, a concealed interest for the victims. Pictures of the ancient manners of Europe, recollections of the glory of former times, and those of the court of one of our most distinguished monarchs, could not be more agreeable to the censorship, which besides began to repent having so often allowed me

to speak of the ancient monarchy, and of the religion of our fathers : these departed subjects, which I was incessantly recalling, excited too powerfully the thoughts of the living.

It is a frequent practice, in pictures, to place some unseemly personage for the purpose of bringing out more the beauty of others : in this romance, my idea has been to paint three men of equally elevated character, but not out of the usual course of nature, and retaining along with the passions, the manners and even the prejudices of their country. The character of the female is also

drawn in the same proportions. The world of imagination, when we transport ourselves thither, should at least make us amends for the world of reality.

It will readily be seen that this romance is the composition of a man who has felt the pangs of exile, and whose heart is entirely wrapped up in his country.

The views which I have given of Grenada, of the Alhambra, and of the ruined Mosque transformed into a church were taken upon the spot. The latter is nothing else

but the Cathedral of Cordova. These descriptions are therefore, a kind of addition to the following passage of the *Itinerary*.

“ From Cadiz, I repaired to Cordova ; I admired the Mosque which is now the Cathedral of that city. I traversed the ancient Betica, described by the poets as the abode of happiness. I ascended as far as Andujar, and retraced my steps in order to see Grenada. The Alhambra appeared to me well worthy of being looked at, even after the temples of Greece. The valley of Grenada is delightful, and reminds one

## XII

very much of that of Sparta ; that the Moors should have regretted such a country may be easily conceived.”—(ITINERARY, part VII. and last.)

There are frequent allusions in this romance, to the history of the Zegris and the Abencerages ; this history is so well known, that I have thought it quite superfluous to give any sketch of it in this advertisement. The romance itself however contains sufficient details to make the text easily understood.

# GENERAL PREFACE

TO THE

COLLECTION OF THE AUTHOR'S WORKS

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HAD I been the master of my own fortune, I would never have published a collection of my works. Posterity (if posterity should ever hear me spoken of) should have done with them what it pleased. That a quarter of a century should have passed over my first productions without having consigned them to oblivion, has not made me presume that they are destined to an immortality,

which I am perhaps less ambitious of than is generally supposed. It is therefore against my natural disposition, and by the sacrifice of that repose, which is the last wish of man, that I now give an edition of my works. It is of little importance to the public to know the motives of my determination ; it is sufficient that it knows (what is the truth) that these motives are honorable.

I have undertaken to write the *Memoirs of my own Life* ; that life has been a very restless one. I have crossed the seas several times ; I have lived in the huts of savages, and in the palaces of kings, in camps and in cities. A traveller in the plains of Greece, a pilgrim at Jerusalem, I have been seated amid all

sorts of ruins. I have witnessed the disappearance of the kingdom of Louis XVI, and the extinction of the empire of Buonaparte; I shared the exile of the Bourbons, and I announced their return. Two weights which seem attached to my fortune, have made it rise and fall successively in an equal proportion; I am taken, I am left, and I am taken again; I am stripped one day, and the next I have a mantle thrown over me, in order to be stripped of it again. I am so accustomed to these squalls, that in whatever port I arrive, I only look upon myself as a navigator who must shortly put to sea again, and therefore form no permanent establishment on land. Two hours were all that I required to quit the



ministry, and to transfer the keys of the hotel to its succeeding occupant.

Whether I am to regard it as matter of regret or congratulation, the fact is certain, that my writings have given their colour to a great number of writings of my own time; for the last five and twenty years my name is mixed up with the movements of social order; it is connected with the reign of Buonaparte, with the restoration of Christian worship and of the *legitimate* monarchy, and with the foundation of the *constitutional* monarchy. One set dislikes me personally, but preaches my doctrines, and seizes my political views, distorting them to its own purposes; another would have no objection to my

person, if I would separate it from my principles. Affairs of the greatest importance have passed through my hands; I have known personally almost all the kings, almost all the men, both ministers and others, who have made a figure in my time. At the beginning of my career I was presented to Louis XVI,—I saw Washington, and I have again fallen back finally on what I am now witnessing. On several occasions Buonaparte threatened me with his wrath and his power, and yet he was attracted by a secret inclination towards me, as I in my turn felt an involuntary admiration of the points of greatness in his character. I might have been every thing in his government had I wished it; but he always failed to secure me, by

## XVIII

giving the reins to his favorite passion and his ruling vice : ambition and hypocrisy.

Vicissitudes of this kind, which have attended my career ever since the termination of an unhappy childhood, will perhaps diffuse some degree of interest over my Memoirs. The works now collected will serve as the 'Proofs and Illustrations' of these Memoirs. From the previous reading of them may be known what I have been, for they include my whole life. Readers, who are fond of this kind of study, will compare the productions of my youth with those of my present age ; there is always something to be gained by these analyses of the human mind.

I think I neither deceive myself, nor judge my own character with too much partiality, in stating my impression on reading over these works for the purpose of correcting them; that there are in them two sentiments predominant: the love of a religion of charity, and a sincere attachment to public liberty. Even in the *Historical Essay*, amidst numberless errors, both these sentiments are distinguishable. If this remark is just, if I have combated every where and at all times in favour of the independence of men and of religious principles, what have I to fear from posterity? It may forget me, but it will not curse my memory.

My works, which are a faithful history of the last thirty wonderful years, pre-

sent, along with what is past, sufficiently clear views of what is to come; I have predicted a great deal, and there will remain behind me undeniable proofs of what I have fruitlessly announced. I have not been blind to the future destinies of Europe; I have never ceased to repeat to the old governments which were good in their time, and had their share of renown, that they had no choice, but either to settle themselves into constitutional monarchies, or to be swallowed up in a republic; a military despotism, which is what they might secretly wish for, would not, in the present day, have an existence of any duration.

Europe, compressed between a new world completely republican, and an an-

cient empire completely military, which has started up suddenly in the midst of the repose of arms, Europe, I say, requires more than ever to understand her situation, in order to take measures for her salvation. If with internal political errors be mixed up external ones, its decomposition will be completed more quickly: the cannon shot, which is sometimes denied to support a just cause, is sooner or later obliged to be fired in a contemptible one.

Twenty-five years have passed away since the commencement of the present century. The men of twenty-five who are about to take our places, have known nothing of the last century, have not collected its traditions, have not sucked in

its doctrines with their mother's milk, have not been nursed under the political system which was then predominant ; in a word, have not come out of the bowels of the ancient monarchy, and feel no other interest in the past, than that which we take in the history of a people that has ceased to exist. The first looks of these generations sought in vain for legitimacy on the throne, that having been swept away seven years before by the revolution. The giant who filled the immense vacuum which legitimacy left behind it, with one hand touched the cap of liberty, and with the other the crown : shortly after he proceeded to place them both on his head, and he alone was capable of supporting this double weight.

These children, who heard nothing but

### XXIII

the din of arms, and saw nothing but palms around their cradles, escaped, by their age, from the oppression of the empire ; they had only the games of victory whose chains were worn by their fathers. Innocent and free, these children were unborn when the revolution committed its horrors ; they were not men when the restoration multiplied its errors ; they have entered into no engagements with our crimes or our errors.

How easy would it have been to have secured the minds of a youthful race, upon which the misfortunes which it has only known by report have yet impressed a shade and a species of gravity ! The restoration was satisfied with offering to this serious youth theatrical representations



of ancient times, and imitations of the past, which is no longer the past. What has been done for the race on which the destiny of France now rests? Nothing. Has its existence even been perceived? No; in the pitiful struggles of vulgar ambition the world has been left to settle itself without a guide. The scattered wrecks of the eighteenth century, which are floating about in the nineteenth, are on the point of sinking; a few years more, and religious, philosophical and political society will be in the hands of sons who are strangers to the manners of their fathers. The seeds of new ideas have every where risen above ground; in vain would we attempt to destroy them; we might cultivate the rising plant, strip it of its venom, and make it bear whole-

some fruit ; but it is not in the power of any one to tear it up by the roots.

It is a most deplorable illusion to suppose our own times exhausted, because it appears impossible that they should still produce, after having given birth to so many events. Weakness goes to sleep with this illusion ; folly believes that it can surprise the human race in a moment of lassitude, and compel it to retrograde. See, however, what happens.

After one has witnessed the French Revolution, it will be said, what can ever happen which is worthy of occupying our attention ? The oldest monarchy in the world overturned, Europe alternately conquered and conquering, crimes unheard of,

dreadful calamities covered over with glory unexampled? what is there to compare to such events? What is there? Look beyond the seas. The whole of America comes forth republican, from that revolution which you pretend to say is finished, and replaced an astonishing spectacle by a spectacle still more astonishing.

And can any one imagine that the world has changed in this manner, without any change in the ideas of men,—can it be believed that the last thirty years are to be considered as not having past, that society can be re-established such as it existed in former times? Recollections which no one participates, idle regrets, an expiring generation, which

the past is summoning, and the present is devouring, will never succeed in reviving that which is completely lifeless. There are opinions which perish, as there are races which become extinct, and both the one and the other remain, at most, objects of curiosity and inquiry in the plains of death. That society, so far from having attained its object, is still marching to new destinies, is what appears to me indisputable. But, let us leave this more or less remote futurity to its youthful heirs ; mine is much too near to allow me to extend my views beyond the horizon of my tomb.

O France ! *my dear country, and my first love !* one of your sons, at the close of his career, is now collecting under

your eyes, the titles which he may possess to your maternal kindness. If he can do no more for you, you can do every thing for him, by declaring that his attachment to your religion, to your king, to your liberties, was agreeable to you. Illustrious and fair country, I would have desired a little glory for myself, only to add to thine !



# Romanse

By Henry CARR.

ANDANTE.



1.  
Oft to my birth place, memory's glances  
Will turn, and my rapt soul entrance!  
Sister! how sweet the minutes roll'd  
In France;  
My Country! thee more dear I hold  
Than Gold.

2.  
Rememb'rst thou how to her breast  
Ours Mother both her children prest,  
And how her bright white locks would glister  
How blest!  
While we with lips of love, sweet sister!  
Kissed her.

3.  
Rememb'rst thou that castle dear  
By which that swift stream flowed and near,  
That Moorish tow'r with age so worn,  
From which  
The trumpets sounded when the morn  
Was born.

4.  
Rememb'rst thou that tranquil lake  
Which the swift swallows kind to stake  
His thirst, where azyr the sweet rose  
Would shake;  
And Sol's last rays at evening's close  
Repose.

5.  
Rememb'rst thou that friend lov'd  
Who my heart's tenderest passion mov'd?  
As, to pluck's flow'rets sweet and fine,  
She rov'd,  
Helen did her fond heart on mine  
Recline.

6.  
Oh when Helen back wilt yield,  
My native hill, my Oak-crown'd field?  
Their memory keeps my heart wounds old,  
Unhealed:  
My Country! thee more dear I hold  
Than Gold.

# **A B E N - H A M E T,**

**THE LAST OF**

**THE ABENCERAGES.**



**WHEN** Boabdil, the last king  
of Grenada, was compelled to  
abandon the kingdom of his  
forefathers, he halted on the  
top of Mount Padul That



elevated spot commanded a view of the sea, on which the unfortunate monarch was about to embark for Africa ; from it also could be discovered Grenada, la Vega, and the Xenil, on the banks of which were erected the tents of Ferdinand and Isabella. At the sight of this beautiful country, and of the cypresses which still marked here and there the tombs of the faithful, Boabdil could not refrain from shedding tears. The sultana Aïxa, his mother, who accompanied him in his exile,

along with the grandees who lately composed his court, said to him : “ Weep now like a woman, for the loss of a kingdom, which thou hast been unable to defend like a man.” They descended from the mountain, and Grenada disappeared from their eyes for ever.

The Moors of Spain, who shared the fate of their sovereign, dispersed themselves throughout Africa ; the tribes of the Zegrís and the Gomeles settled in the kingdom of Fez,

which was their aboriginal country; the Vanegas and the Alabes took up their abode upon the coast, from Oran to Algiers; finally the Abencerages established themselves in the environs of Tunis; they formed, within sight of the ruins of Carthage, a colony, which, even in our own times, is distinguished from the Moors of Africa, by its elegant manners, and the mildness of its laws.

These families carried into their new country, the remem-

brance of their old one. The *Paradise of Grenada* lived constantly in their memory, the mothers repeated its name to their children at the breast ; they lulled them to sleep with the romances of the Zegrís and the Abencerages. Prayers were repeated in the mosque every five days, with the face turned towards Grenada ; and Allah was implored to restore to his chosen people that land of delights. In vain did the country of the *lotophagi* present to the exiles its fruits, its waters,

its verdure, and its glorious sun; far from the *Vermilion Towers*,\* there were neither pleasant fruits, limpid streams, fresh verdure, or sun worthy to be looked at. If any one shewed the plains of Bagrada to an exile, the latter only shook his head, and exclaimed with a sigh : “ Grenada!”

The Abencerages, particularly, preserved the most tender and faithful remembrance of

\* The towers of a palace at Grenada.

their country. They had quitted, with the most poignant anguish, the theatre of their glory, and the banks which they had made so often ring with the war cry of "Honor and love." Being no longer able to lift the spear in the deserts, or to wear the helmet in a colony of farmers, they devoted themselves to the study of simples, a profession in equal estimation among the Arabs with that of arms. Thus did that race of warriors, which formerly inflicted wounds, now make its occupa-

tion that of healing them. In this particular, it retained something of its original genius, for the knights themselves frequently dressed the wounds of the enemies they had overthrown.

The cottage of that family, which lately possessed palaces, was not placed in the hamlet of the other exiles, at the foot of Mount Mamelife ; it was built amidst the ruins of Carthage, on the sea shore, in the very place where St. Louis expired on his

grave, and where a Mahometan hermitage is now to be seen. Along the walls of the cottage were hung bucklers made of lions' skins, bearing impressed upon a field of azure, two figures of savages breaking down a town with a club ; round this device was this motto : " It is but little !" the coat of arms and devices of the Abencerages, Spears adorned with white and blue pennons, alburnos, and helmets of slashed satin, were ranged by the side of the bucklers, and figured in the midst



of scimitars and poignards. Here and there also were suspended gauntlets, bits ornamented with precious stones, large silver stirrups, long swords, whose sheaths had been embroidered by the hands of princesses, and golden spurs, with which the Yseults, the Ginevras and Orianas were wont of old to invest their gallant knights.

Beneath these trophies of glory, were placed upon tables the trophies of a life of peace.

These were plants culled on the summits of Mount Atlas, and in the deserts of Sahara ; many of them had even been brought from the plain of Grenada. Some were intended to relieve the ailments of the body ; others were supposed to mitigate the severity of mental suffering. The Abencerages regarded as most valuable those which were useful in calming vain regrets, in dissipating foolish illusions, and the ever reviving, ever deceiving, hopes of happiness. Unfortunately these simples

possessed qualities of an opposite nature, and the sweet odour of a flower of the country frequently acted as a sort of poison to the illustrious exiles.

Twenty-four years had passed away since the taking of Grenada. In that short space of time, fourteen Abencerages had perished, by the effects of a new climate, the accidents of a wandering life, and principally by the chagrin which imperceptibly undermines the strength of

man. Only a single descendant remained, the last hope of that illustrious family. Aben-Hamet bore the name of that Abencerage, who was accused by the Zegrís of having seduced the sultana Alfaïma. In him were united the beauty, the valour, the courtesy and the generosity of his ancestors, with that mild lustre and slight tinge of melancholy which adversity, nobly supported, inspires. He was only twenty-two years of age when he lost his father, and then determined to

make a pilgrimage to the land of his ancestors, in order to gratify the secret longing of his heart, and to execute a plan which he carefully concealed from his mother.

He embarked at the port of Tunis; and a favorable wind carried him to Carthagera, where he landed, and immediately proceeded on the road to Grenada. He gave himself out for an Arabian physician, who had come to collect plants amid the rocks of the Sierra-Nevada.

A quiet mule bore him slowly along in the country where formerly the Abencerages were carried with the swiftness of the wind on warlike coursers ; a guide walked before, leading two other mules ornamented with bells and party coloured woollen tufts. Aben-Hamet crossed the large heaths and woods of palm-trees of the kingdom of Murcia ; from the great age of these trees, he conjectured that they must have been planted by his ancestors, and his heart was pierced by regret. There rose a tower in

which the sentinel, in former times, kept watch, during the wars of the Moors and Christians; here appeared a ruined building whose architecture proved its Moorish origin; a fresh subject of grief to Aben-Hamet! He dismounted from his mule, and on pretence of seeking for plants, hid himself for a few moments, in the ruins, in order to give free vent to his tears. He then proceeded on his road, in a state of reverie, which was encouraged by the noise of the mule bells, and the monotonous songs of his guide. The latter

only interrupted his long winded ditty, in order to quicken the pace of his mules by giving them the names of *beautiful* and *brave*, or to scold them by the epithets of *lazy* and *obstinate*.

Flocks of sheep directed by a shepherd like an army, in sere and barren plains, and occasionally a solitary traveller, far from diffusing an appearance of life upon the road, only served, in a manner, to make it more gloomy and desert. These travellers all wore a sword at-



tached to the waist ; they were wrapped up in a mantle, and a large slouched hat half covered their faces. As they passed, they saluted Aben-Hamet, who could only make out, in their noble salutation, the names of God, of Señor and of Knight. At the close of day, the Abencerage took his place in the midst of strangers at the inn, without being troubled by their indiscreet curiosity. No one spoke to him, no one questioned him ; his turban, his robe, and his arms, excited no surprise. As it

had been the will of Allah, that the Moors of Spain should lose their beautiful country, Aben-Hamet could not help entertaining a feeling of esteem for its grave conquerors.

Emotions still more vivid awaited the Abencerage at the end of his journey. Grenada is built at the foot of the Sierra-Nevada, on two high hills, separated by a deep valley. The houses, built on the declivities in the hollow of the valley, give this city the shape and appear-

ance of a grenadoe half open, from which resemblance it derives its name. Two rivers, the Xenil and the Dauro, the sands of the first of which contain gold, and the other silver, wash the feet of the hills, form a junction, and afterwards take a serpentine course in the midst of a charming valley, called la Vega. This plain, which is overlooked by Grenada, is covered with vines, with pomegranate, fig, mulberry and orange trees; it is surrounded by mountains of singularly beautiful form and

colour. An enchanting sky, a pure and delicious air affect the soul with a secret languor, from which even the passing traveller finds it difficult to preserve himself. Every one feels that, in this country, the tender passions would have very soon stifled the heroic ones, if true love did not always feel the wish to have glory as its companion.

As soon as Aben-Hamet discovered the tops of the first buildings of Grenada, his heart

beat so violently, that he was obliged to stop his mule. Crossing his arms over his breast, and fixing his eyes on the holy city, he remained speechless and immoveable. The guide halted in his turn; and, as elevated sentiments are easily understood by a Spaniard, he appeared affected, and conjectured that the Moor's feelings were excited by the sight of his former country. The Abencerage at last broke silence.

“Guide!” said he, “be happy!

hide not the truth from me, for the waves were calm, and the moon entered into her crescent on the day of thy nativity. What are these towers which shine like stars over a green forest?"

"That is the Alhambra," answered the guide.

"And the other castle upon the opposite hill?" said Aben-Hamet.

"It is the Generalife," replied the Spaniard. "In that castle there is a garden planted

with myrtles, where it is said, the Abencerage was surprised with the sultana Alfaïma; farther off, you see the Albaicyn, and nearer to us the Vermilion Towers."

Every word, which the guide uttered, pierced the heart of Aben-Hamet. How cruel it is to be obliged to have recourse to strangers for information respecting the monuments of our ancestors, and to have the history of our family and friends related to us by indifferent persons. The guide, putting an

end to the reflexions of Aben-Hamet, exclaimed : “ Let us proceed, Sir ; it is the will of God ! Do not be downcast. Is not Francis I., even now, a prisoner in our Madrid ? It is the will of God ! ” He took off his hat, crossed himself with great fervor, and drove on his mules. The Abencerage, spurring on his, exclaimed in his turn : “ It was thus written.”\* They

\* An expression which the Mussulmans have constantly in their mouths, and apply to almost every event in their lives.



then descended towards Grenada.

They passed close to the great ash-tree, memorable as the scene of the battle between Muça and the grand-master of Calatrava, in the time of the last king of Grenada. They made the circuit of the Alameida walk, and entered the city by the gate of Elvira. They re-ascended the Rambla, and arrived shortly after at a square, surrounded on all sides by buildings of Moorish architecture. A khan

was opened in this square by the Moors of Africa, whom the trade in silks attracted in crowds to Grenada. Thither the guide conducted Aben-Hamet.

The Abencerage was too agitated to enjoy much rest in his new habitation; the idea of his country tormented him. Unable any longer to master the feelings which preyed upon his heart, he stole out privately, in the middle of the night, to wander about the streets of Grenada. He attempted to recon-

noitre, with his eyes or with his hands, some of the monuments, which the elders of his tribe had so frequently described to him.

Perhaps the lofty edifice, whose walls he could only half distinguish through the darkness, was formerly the residence of the Abencerages? Perhaps it was in this solitary square that, in other times, those splendid carousals were given, which raised the glory of Grenada to the skies; there it was that, on such occasions, troops of horse-

men superbly dressed, marched in procession; there were stationed the galleys loaded with arms and with flowers, and dragons darting out fire, and carrying illustrious warriors concealed in their sides; ingenious inventions of pleasure and gallantry.

But alas! in place of the sound of *chuafins*, of the noise of trumpets, and of songs of love, the deepest silence reigned around Aben-Hamet. This mute city had changed its

inhabitants, and the victors reposed on the couches of the vanquished. “ They sleep then, these proud Spaniards,” exclaimed the young Moor with indignation, “ under the roofs from which they have banished my ancestors ! and I, an Abencerage, I wake, unknown, solitary and forsaken, at the gate of my father’s palace.”

Aben-Hamet then reflected upon the destinies of man, on the vicissitudes of fortune, on the fall of empires, on Grenada

itself surprised at last by its enemies in the midst of pleasures, and exchanging all at once its garlands of flowers for chains; he pictured to himself its citizens forsaking their homes in gala dresses, like guests, who, in the disorder of their attire, are suddenly driven from the chambers of festivity by a conflagration.

All these images, all these ideas, crowded on each other in the soul of Aben-Hamet; full of grief and anguish, his thoughts were principally turned to the

execution of the project which had brought him to Grenada. Day surprised him in this reverie ; the Abencerage had lost his way : he found himself far from the khan, in a remote suburb of the city. All was yet asleep : no noise disturbed the silence of the streets ; the doors and windows of the houses were still shut ; the clarion of the cock alone proclaimed, in the habitation of the poor, the return of labour and of pain.

After wandering about for a

long time, without being able to find his way, Aben-Hamet heard a door open. He saw a young female come out, dressed nearly like the gothic queens which we see sculptured on the monuments of our ancient abbeys ; her black corset trimmed with jet tightened her elegant waist ; her short petticoat, narrow and without folds, discovered a beautiful leg and charming foot ; a black mantilla was also thrown over her head ; with her left hand she held this mantilla crossed and drawn up close



like a stomacher under her chin, in such a manner that nothing was seen of her face but her large eyes and rosy mouth ; a duenna walked by her side ; a page preceded her, carrying a prayer book ; two footmen in livery followed at some distance the beautiful unknown ; she was repairing to morning prayers, which were announced by the ringing of a bell in a neighbouring monastery.

Aben-Hamet fancied he saw the angel Israfill, or the youngest

of the houris. The Spanish maiden, not less surprised, looked at the Abencerage, whose turban, robe and arms set off to still greater advantage his noble countenance. Recovering from her first astonishment, she beckoned to the stranger to approach, with the grace and freedom peculiar to the women of that voluptuous country. “Señor Moor,” said she to him, “you appear to have recently arrived at Grenada; have you lost your way?”

“ Sultana of flowers,” replied Aben-Hamet, “delight of men’s eyes, christian slave more beautiful than the virgins of Georgia, thou hast rightly guessed ! I am a stranger in this city : having lost myself amidst its palaces, I was unable to find my way back to the khan of the Moors. May Mahomet touch thy heart, and reward thee for thy hospitality !”

“ The Moors are renowned for their gallantry,” replied the

lady with the sweetest smile ;  
“ but I am neither sultana of  
flowers, nor a slave, nor desirous  
of being recommended  
to Mahomet. Follow me, Sir  
knight, I will lead you back to  
the khan of the Moors.”

She walked lightly before the  
Abencerage, led him to the  
door of the khan, to which she  
pointed with her hand, then  
passed on to the back of a palace,  
and disappeared.

To what then is the repose

of life attached? his country no longer occupies solely and exclusively the mind of Aben-Hamet; Grenada is no longer in his eyes deserted, forsaken, widowed and solitary; she is dearer than ever to his heart, but it is a new illusion which embellishes her ruins! With the recollection of his ancestors is now mingled another charm: he has discovered the burial place where the ashes of the Abencerages repose; but while he prays, throws himself on the ground, and sheds a flood of

filial tears, he fancies that the young Spanish maiden has sometimes passed over these tombs, and he no longer considers his ancestors as so unfortunate.

In vain does he wish to occupy himself with nothing but his pilgrimage to the land of his fathers ; in vain does he scour the hills of the Dauro and the Xenil to gather plants from them at the morning dawn ; the young Christian lady is the flower which he is now in search of. What fruitless efforts has he not

already made to discover the palace of his enchantress ! How many times has he attempted to retrace the same ground over which his divine guide conducted him ! How many times has he fancied that he has recognized the same bell, and the same cock crow, which he had heard near her residence. Deceived by similar sounds, he runs immediately to the side from which they proceed ; but the magic palace no where presents itself to his eyes ! Frequently also the uniformity of the female

dress at Grenada gave him a ray of hope: at a distance every christian female resembled the mistress of his heart ;—when close to him, not one possessed her beauty or her gracefulness. Finally, Aben-Hamet had made the round of the churches, in order to discover the stranger ; he had even penetrated to the tomb of Ferdinand and Isabella, but this was the greatest sacrifice which he had yet made to love.

One day he was herborizing



in the valley of the Dauro. The flowery declivity of the southern hill supported the walls of the Alhambra, and the gardens of the Generalife; the northern hill was adorned with the Albaicyn, with smiling orchards, and with grottos, inhabited by a numerous population. At the western extremity of the valley, were descried the spires of Grenada, which rose in groups from the midst of green oaks and cypresses. At the other extremity, towards the east, the eye rested upon convents and

hermitages built on points of rocks, some of the ruins of the the ancient Illiberia, and in the distance, the heights of the Sierra-Nevada. The waters of the Dauro rolled along in the middle of the vale, and presented on the margin of its course newly erected mills, noisy waterfalls, the broken arches of a Roman aqueduct, and the remains of a bridge of the time of the Moors.

Aben-Hamet was neither miserable enough, nor happy

enough to enjoy properly the charms of solitude ; he roamed over these delightful banks with absence and indifference. In the course of his random walk, he struck into an alley of trees which wound round the declivity of the hill of the Albaicyn. A country house, surrounded by a grove of orange trees, presented itself to his view ; as he approached the grove, he heard the sounds of a voice and a guitar. Between the voice, the features and looks of a woman there are relations which never

deceive a true lover. “ It is my houri !” said Aben-Hamet, and he listened with a beating heart ; at the name of the Abencerages several times repeated, his heart beat still quicker. The fair unknown was singing a Spanish romance retracing the history of the Abencerages and the Zegrís. Aben-Hamet was no longer able to restrain his emotions. He darted through a hedge of myrtle, and found himself in the midst of a party of young ladies, who were alarmed at his appearance, and

with loud screams, fled in all directions. The Spanish lady who had been singing, and who still held the guitar, exclaimed : “ It is the Moorish gentleman ! ” and called back her companions. “ Favorite of the genies,” said the Abencerage, “ I sought thee as an Arab searches for a spring at the heat of noon. I heard the sound of thy guitar ; thou wert singing the heroes of my country. I discovered thee by the beauty of thy accents, and I come to lay at thy feet the heart of Aben-Hamet.”

“ And it was in thinking of you,” replied Donna Blanca, “ that I sang the romance of the Abencerages : ever since I saw you, I fancied that these Moorish knights resembled you.”

The colour mounted slightly to Blanca’s forehead as she pronounced these words. Aben-Hamet felt as if he could have thrown himself at the feet of the young Christian, and declared to her, that he was himself the last Abencerage ; but a remnant of prudence restrained him : he was

afraid lest his name, from its celebrity at Grenada, should give uneasiness to the governor. The war with the Moriscoes was scarcely terminated; and the appearance of an Abencerage at that moment might give the Spaniards just cause of apprehension. It was not that Aben-Hamet was alarmed at the prospect of danger; but he trembled at the idea of being obliged to remove himself for ever from the daughter of don Rodrigo.

Donna Blanca was descend-

ed from a family which derived its origin from the Cid de Bivar, and from Ximena, the daughter of Count Gormez de Gormas. The posterity of the conqueror of Valencia, owing to the ingratitude of the court of Castille, was reduced to a state of extreme poverty ; it was even believed, for several centuries, to be extinct, such was the obscurity into which it had fallen. But, about the time of the conquest of Grenada, a last descendant of the race of the Bivars, the grandfather of



Blanca, made himself distinguished, less by his pedigree than by his signal valour. After the expulsion of the infidels, Ferdinand rewarded this descendant of the Cid with the estates of several Moorish families, and created him Duke of Santa-Fè. The newly created Duke fixed his residence at Grenada, and died at the prime of life, leaving an only son already married, Don Rodrigo, father of Blanca.

Donna Theresa de Xeres, the wife of Don Rodrigo, gave birth

to a son, who received, at his birth, the name of Rodrigo, like all his ancestors, but was called Don Carlos, to distinguish him from his father. The great events of which Don Carlos was a witness from his earliest years, the dangers to which he was exposed while yet in his nonage, contributed to render still more grave and severe, a character naturally disposed to austerity. Don Carlos was scarcely fourteen years of age, when he followed Cortez to Mexico: he supported all the

dangers, and was a witness of all the horrors of that astonishing adventure ; and he was present at the overthrow of the last king of a world until then unknown. Three years after that tragic catastrophe, Don Carlos had returned to Europe, and was present at the battle of Pavia, as if he had come to witness kingly honour and valour sinking under the strokes of fortune. The aspect of a new world, long voyages on seas which had never before been navigated, and the spec-

tacle of the revolutions and vicissitudes of fate, had made a deep impression on the religious and melancholy imagination of Don Carlos. He entered into the knightly order of Calatrava; and devoting himself to celibacy, destined the whole of his fortune to his sister.

Blanca de Bivar, the only sister of Don Carlos, and much younger than him, was the idol of her father. She lost her mother in her infancy, and had just entered into her eighteenth

year, when Aben-Hamet made his appearance at Grenada. Every thing about this enchanting woman was fascination itself, her voice was ravishing and her dancing lighter than the zephyr. Sometimes she delighted in directing a chariot, like Armida ; at other times she flew upon the back of the swiftest barb of Andalusia, like those charming fairies who appeared to Tristan and to Galaor in the forests. Athens would have taken her for Aspasia, and Paris for Diana of Poitiers, who

was then beginning to shine at the court. But with the charms of a Frenchwoman, she had all the passions of a Spaniard, and her natural coquetry in no degree diminished the fixity, the constancy, the strength and elevation of the feelings of her heart.

At the noise of the screams, which the young ladies sent forth, when Aben-Hamet rushed into the midst of the grove, Don Rodrigo came running up: "My father," said Blanca,

“this is the Moorish gentleman of whom I spoke to you. He heard me singing, and recognized me ; he entered the garden to thank me for having put him in his right road.”

The Duke of Santa-Fè received the Abencerage with the grave and unaffected politeness of the Spaniards. This nation has none of those slavish airs, none of those circumlocutory phrases, which reveal the abjectness of ideas, and the degradation of the soul. The

language of the first nobleman and of the peasant is the same, the salutation the same, the compliments, habits and customs are in all respects the same. In proportion as the confidence and generosity of this people to strangers is unbounded, in the same proportion is its vengeance terrible when betrayed. Of heroic courage, of patience inexhaustible, incapable of yielding to bad fortune, it must either vanquish, or be crushed to the earth. It has little of what is called wit, but exalted



passions are with it a substitute for that light which is derived from the refinement and abundance of ideas. A Spaniard, who passes the day without speaking, who has seen nothing, and cares not for seeing any thing, who has read nothing, studied nothing, compared nothing, will yet discover, in the greatness of his resolutions, the necessary resources at the moment of adversity.

It was Don Rodrigo's birth day, and Blanca was giving

her father a *tertulia*, or little entertainment, on the occasion, in this delightful solitude. The Duke invited Aben-Hamet to seat himself amidst the young ladies, who were amusing themselves with the turban and robe of the stranger. Some velvet cushions were brought, and Aben-Hamet reclined himself on these cushions in the Moorish fashion. He was questioned respecting his country, and his adventures; he replied to these enquiries with grace, spirit and vivacity. He spoke the

purest Castilian ; one would have taken him for a Spaniard, if he had not almost constantly said *thou* instead of *you*. This word had something so sweet about it in his mouth, that Blanca could not help feeling a secret spite when he addressed it to one of her young companions.

A numerous retinue of servants appeared, and were the bearers of chocolate, of fruit cakes, and little sweet cakes from Malaga, white as

snow, porous and light as sponges. After the *refresco*, Blanca was intreated to execute one of those characteristic dances, in which she excelled the most accomplished Guitanas. She was obliged to accede to the wishes of her friends. Aben-Hamet was silent, but his supplicating looks spoke as eloquently as his mouth would have done. Blanca chose a *zambra*, an expressive dance which the Spaniards have borrowed from the Moors.

One of the young ladies began to play upon the guitar the air of this foreign dance. The daughter of Don Rodrigo took off her veil, and fastened a pair of ebony castanets round her white hands. Her black hair falls in ringlets on her alabaster neck; her mouth and her eyes smile in concert; her colour is animated by the action of her heart. All at once she makes the noisy ebony re-echo, beats time threetimes, commencesthe song of the *zambra*, and min-

gling her voice with the sounds of the guitar, darts off like lightning.

What variety in her steps!  
What elegance in her attitudes!  
Now she raises her arms with vivacity, then she lets them fall with languor. Sometimes she springs forward as if intoxicated with pleasure, and then retires as if overwhelmed with sorrow. She turns her head, seems to call to her some invisible person, modestly holds out her rosy cheek to receive

the kiss of a newly married husband, flies back ashamed, returns delighted and consoled, marches with a noble and almost warlike step, afterwards skims afresh the verdant mead. The harmony between her dancing, her singing, and the music of the guitar was perfect. The voice of Blanca, under a slight veil, had that species of accent which stirs up the passions from the very bottom of the soul. The Spanish music, composed of sighs, of lively movements, of melancholy re-

petitions, of airs suddenly stopped, presents a singular mixture of gaiety and melancholy. This music and this dancing settled the destiny of the last Abencerage irrecoverably; they would have been sufficient to trouble a heart less susceptible than his own.

In the evening they returned to Grenada by the valley of the Dauro. Don Rodrigo was so delighted with the noble and polished manners of Aben-Hamet, that he would not let



him depart without receiving his promise to come frequently and amuse Blanca with the wonderful stories of the East. . The Moor, at the height of his wishes, accepted the invitation of the Duke of Santa-Fè ; and, after the following day, he was regular in his visits to the palace which contained her whom he loved more than the light of day.

Blanca found her heart very soon engaged in a deep passion, from the very impossibility she had fancied that ever she should

feel that passion. That she should love an infidel, a Moor, a unknown stranger, appeared to her so extraordinary, that she took no precaution against the malady which began to insinuate itself into her veins. But no sooner did she become sensible of its inroads, than she accepted this malady like a true Spaniard. The dangers and troubles which she foresaw, neither made her draw back when on the brink of the precipice, nor deliberate long with her heart. She said to herself: “ Let Aben-

Hamet become a Christian : let him love me : and I will follow him to the extremity of the earth."

On his part, the Abencerage also felt the full power of an irresistible passion : he no longer lived but for Blanca ; he no longer occupied himself with the plans which had brought him to Grenada. It was easy for him to obtain the information which he came expressly in pursuit of : but every other interest, except that of his love, had

vanished from his eyes. He even dreaded the knowledge which might produce a change in his mode of existence. He asked for nothing ; he wished not to know any thing. He said to himself : “ Should Blanca become a Mahometan ; should she love me : I will serve her to my last breath.”

Thus determined in their resolutions, Aben - Hamet and Blanca only waited for a favorable moment to discover their mutual sentiments to each other. It was then the spring of the

year. " You have not yet seen the Alhambra," said the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè to the Abencerage. " If I can guess, by some words which have dropped from you, your family is originally from Grenada. You will perhaps be pleased to visit the palace of your ancient kings? I will myself, this evening, be your guide thither."

Aben-Hamet swore, by the prophet, that no excursion could ever be more agreeable to him.

At the hour appointed for this pilgrimage to the Alhambra, the daughter of Don Rodrigo was ready, mounted on a white mule, accustomed to climb the rocks like a goat. Aben-Hamet accompanied her on an Andalusian horse, equipped in the Turkish manner. In the rapid course of the young Moor, his purple robe was swelled by the wind, his crooked sabre echoed on the elevated saddle, and the wind shook the plume with which his turban was surmounted. The common people, charmed by

his graceful carriage, called out on seeing him pass : “ It is an infidel prince whom Donna Blanca is going to convert.”

They first went up a long street which still bore the name of an illustrious Moorish family. This street bordered on the exterior inclosure of the Alhambra. They then crossed a wood of young elm trees, arrived at a fountain, and shortly found themselves in front of the interior inclosure of the palace of Boabdil. In a wall flanked with

towers and surmounted by battlements, was a gate called the Gate of Judgment. They passed through this first gate, and proceeded along a narrow path which led them in a serpentine course between high walls and half ruined houses : this brought them to the square of the Algibes, close to which Charles V. was then erecting a palace. From thence, turning northward, they halted in a desert court, at the foot of an unornamented wall, out of repair from the effects of time. Aben-Hamet,



springing lightly from his horse, presented his hand to Blanca, and assisted her in alighting from her mule. The servants knocked at a deserted door, the threshold of which was concealed by the grass ; the door opened, and all at once disclosed to view the secret recesses of the Alhambra.

All the charms of, and regrets for his country, mingled with the illusions of love, seized the heart of Aben-Hamet. Silent and immoveable, his wondering looks dived into this habitation

of the genii. He fancied himself transported to the entrance of one of those palaces which are described in the Arabian tales. Light galleries, canals of white marble bordered with lemon and orange trees in full bloom, fountains, and solitary courts, presented themselves in all directions to his eyes; and through the lengthened vaults of the porticoes he perceived other labyrinths and fresh enchantments. The azure blue of the most heavenly sky appeared between the columns, which supported a chain of gothic

arches. The walls were covered with arabesques, which seemed to the eye like imitations of those stuffs of the east, which, in the ennui of the harem, are embroidered by the caprice of a female slave. An air of voluptuousness, of religion, and of war, seemed to breathe in this magic edifice; it was a species of lovers' cloister, a myterious retreat, where the Moorish sovereigns tasted all the pleasures, and forgot all the duties of life.

After some minutes of surprise and of silence, the two

lovers entered into this residence of fallen greatness and past felicity. They first made the round of the hall of Mesucar, in the midst of the perfume of flowers and the cool freshness of waters. They then penetrated into the Court of Lions. The agitation of Aben-Hamet increased at every step. "Didst thou not fill my soul with delight," said he to Blanca, "with what pain should I find myself obliged to ask of thee, a Spaniard, the history of this palace! Ah! these places are

made to serve as a retreat for happiness; and I. . . .”

Aben-Hamet perceived the name of Boabdil enchased in the mosaics: “O my king!” exclaimed he, “what is become of thee? where shall I find thee? In thy deserted Alhambra!” And tears of fidelity, of loyalty, and of honor suffused the eyes of the young Moor. “Your old masters,” said Blanca, “or rather the kings of your fathers, were ungrateful.”—“What signifies it,” returned the Aben-

cerage, "they were unfortunate."

As he pronounced these words, Blanca conducted him into an apartment which seemed to be the very sanctuary of the temple of love. The elegance of this asylum could not be surpassed; the entire ceiling, painted blue and gold, and composed of arabesques of filagree work, allowed the light to appear as if through a tissue of flowers. A fountain spouted in the midst of the building, the

waters of which, falling again in a shower of dew, were received in an alabaster shell. "Aben-Hamet," said Blanca, "look well at this fountain; it received the disfigured heads of the Abencerages. You can still see, on the marble, the stain of the blood of the unhappy men who were sacrificed to Boabdil's suspicions. It is thus that, in your country, men who seduce credulous women are treated."

Aben-Hamet had ceased to listen to Blanca; he had pro-

strated himself, and kissed respectfully the mark of the blood of his ancestors. Then rising he exclaimed: “ O Blanca! I swear, by the blood of these knights, to love thee with the constancy, the fidelity and the ardor of an Abencerage!”

“ You love me then!” returned Blanca, clasping her beautiful hands, and raising her eyes to heaven; “ but do you forget that you are an infidel, a Moor, an enemy, and that I am a Christian and a Spaniard?”



“ O holy prophet !” said Aben-Hamet, “ be thou witness of my oaths !. . . .” Blanca interrupted him, “ And what reliance think you can I place on the oaths of a persecutor of my God ? Do you know whether I love you ? Who has given you the assurance to hold such language to me ?”

Aben-Hamet in consternation replied : “ True, lady, I am only thy slave ; thou hast not chosen me to be thy knight.”

“ Moor,” said Blanca, “ lay artifice aside. Thou hast seen, by my looks, that I love thee ; my passion for thee exceeds all bounds : be a Christian, and nothing shall prevent me from being thine. But, if the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè venture to speak to thee thus frankly, thou mayest judge, from that very circumstance, that she will know how to conquer herself, and that no enemy of the Christians shall ever possess any claim to her.”

Aben-Hamet, in a transport of passion, seized the hands of Blanca, and placed them first on his turban, and then on his heart : “ Allah is powerful, and Aben-Hamet is happy ! O Mahomet, let this Christian acknowledge thy law, and nothing can. . . . . ” — “ Thou art a blasphemer,” said Blanca, “ let us depart hence.”

Leaning on the arm of the Moor, she proceeded to the fountain of the Twelve Lions, which gives its name to one of the

courts of the Alhambra. “Stranger,” said the artless Spanish maiden, “when I look at thy robe, thy turban, and thy arms, and think of our loves, I fancy I see the shade of the handsome Abencerage walking in this forsaken retreat with the unfortunate Alfaïma. Explain to me the Arabic inscription which is engraved on the marble of this fountain.”

Aben-Hamet read these words:

*The beautiful princess who*

*walks, covered with pearls, in her garden, adds to the beauty of it so prodigiously. . . .\** The rest of the inscription was effaced.

“ It is for thee that this inscription was made,” said A-ben-Hamet. “ Beloved Sul-tana, these palaces have never been so beautiful in their youth, as they now are in their ruins.

\* This inscription, as well as several others, is still existing. It is needless to say that I wrote the description of the Al-hambra on the spot.

Listen to the murmur of the fountains, the waters of which have been turned from their course by the moss : look at the gardens, which we see through these half ruined arcades ; contemplate the star of day, which is setting beyond all these porticoes ; how sweet it is to wander with thee in these abodes ! Thy words embalm these retreats like the roses of Yemen. With what delight do I discover, in thy speech, some of the accents of the language of my

fathers ! The mere rustling of thy dress on these marbles makes my heart leap. The air is only perfumed because it has touched thy tresses. Beautiful art thou, as the genius of my country in the midst of these ruins ! But, can Aben-Hamet hope to fix thy heart ? What is he, when compared to thee ! He has roamed over the mountains with his father ; he knows the plants of the desert ..... Alas ! there is not one of them, that can heal the

wound which thou hast given him !..... He carries arms, but he is not a knight. I said to myself formerly : ‘ The water of the sea which sleeps under shelter in the hollow of the rock, is tranquil and silent, while all that is in the open sea is noisy and agitated : Aben-Hamet ! such will be thy life, silent, peaceful and unknown, in an unknown corner of the earth, while the court of the Sultan is overturned by storms !’ I said so to myself, young Christian ; but thou hast proved to



me that the tempest may also disturb the drop of water in the hollow of the rock."

Blanca listened with delight to a language which was so new to her, and the oriental turn of which seemed so much in harmony with this fairy abode, which she rambled over with her lover. Love penetrated her heart in all directions: she felt her knees sink under her, and was obliged to lean more heavily on the arm of her companion. Aben - Hamet supported the

sweet burden, and repeated to himself as he walked along :  
“ Ah ! why am I not an illustrious Abencerage !”

“ Thou wouldst please me less,” said Blanca, “ for I should be more unhappy ; remain in obscurity and live for me. A brave knight often forgets his love for glory.”

“ Thou canst not have this danger to apprehend,” replied Aben-Hamet with quickness.

“ And how wouldst thou love me then, if thou wert an Abencérage ?” demanded the descendant of Ximena.

“ I would love thee more than glory, and less than honor !” was the answer of the noble Moor.

The sun had sunk beneath the horizon during the promenade of the two lovers ; they had traversed the whole of the Alhambra. What recollections were presented by it to the

mind of Aben-Hamet! *Here* the Sultana received by means of air-holes, the smoke of the perfumes which were burnt under her; *there*, in that secluded retreat, she adorned herself with the glorious attire of the east. And it was Blanca, it was his beloved, who related all these details to the handsome youth whom she idolized. The rising moon diffused her doubtful light in the forsaken sanctuaries and in the deserted courts of the Alhambra; her silver rays reflected

upon the green turf of the gardens, and upon the walls of the apartments, the lace work of an aerial architecture, the arches of the cloisters, the flitting shadows of the spouting waters, and those of the trees agitated by the zephyr. The nightingale sang in a cypress which pierced the dome of a ruined mosque, and the echoes repeated her plaintive strains. By the light of the moon, Aben - Hamet wrote the name of Blanca on the marble of the Hall of the Two Sisters ; he traced it in

Arabic characters, in order that the traveller might find an additional mystery for the exercise of his conjectures in this palace of mysteries.

“ Moor,” said Blanca, “ these amusements are too cruel ; let us quit this spot. The destiny of my life is fixed for ever. Bear well in mind these words : ‘ Musulman, I am thy mistress without hope ; Christian, I am thy fortunate wife’ .”

Aben - Hamet answered :

“ Christian, I am thy despairing slave ; Musulman, I am thy proud husband.”

And these noble lovers departed from this dangerous palace.

The passion of Blanca increased every day, and that of Aben-Hamet became equally violent. He was so transported at the idea of being loved for his own sake, and of owing the sentiments which he had inspired to no foreign cause, that

he did not disclose the secret of his birth to the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè: he felt a secret and delicate pleasure in reserving the information that he was of an illustrious name and race, until the very day when she would consent to give him her hand. But he was suddenly recalled to Tunis. His mother had been attacked by an incurable disease, and wished to embrace and bless her son before her death. Aben-Hamet presented himself at the palace of Blanca. "Sultana,"



said he to her, " my mother is at the point of death. She has sent for me to close her eyes. Wilt thou continue to love me ?"

" Thou leavest me then," replied Blanca turning pale ;  
" shall I never see thee more ?"

" Come with me; I wish to exact an oath of thee, and to give thee one in return, which death alone can break. Follow me."

They proceeded together to a cemetery which was formerly that of the Moors. Here and there were still to be seen little funeral columns round which the sculptor had formerly figured a turban ; but which the Christians had subsequently replaced by a cross. Aben-Hamet led Blanca to the foot of these columns.

“ Blanca, this is the place where my ancestors repose ; I swear by their ashes to love thee until the day when the an-

gel of judgment shall summon me to the tribunal of Allah. I promise thee never to engage my heart to another woman, and to take thee for my wife, as soon as thou shalt know the divine light of the prophet. Every year, at this period, I will return to Grenada, to see if thou hast kept thy faith to me, and if thou wilt renounce thy errors."

"And I," said Blanca, in tears, "will expect thee every year; I will preserve, until my

latest breath, the faith which I have sworn to thee; and I will receive thee for my husband, when the God of the Christians, more powerful than thy mistress, shall have melted thy infidel heart."

Aben-Hamet departs, the winds carry him to the African shores. His mother had just expired. He bestows upon her a tribute of tears; he embraces her coffin. Swift roll the months; sometimes wandering

amid the ruins of Carthage, sometimes seated on the tomb of Saint-Louis, the banished Abencerage longs for the day which is to carry him back to Grenada. That day at last last arrives : Aben-Hamet embarks, and the vessel directs her course to Malaga. With what transport, with what joy, but joy mixed with apprehension, did he descry the first promontories of Spain ! Is Blanca expecting him on these shores ? Does she still remember the

poor Arab, who has never ceased to adore her under the palm tree of the desert ?

The daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè was not unfaithful to her vows. She had requested her father to convey her to Malaga. From the mountain tops which bordered the uninhabited coast, she followed with her eyes the distant vessels and the flying sails. During the tempest, she contemplated with alarm, the sea, as it was raised into fury by the winds. Then

it was that she loved to lose herself in the clouds, to expose herself in dangerous passages, to feel herself washed by the same waves, or carried along by the same hurricane which threatened the life of Aben-Hamet. As she saw the plaintive seamew skim the waves with her large crooked wings, and fly towards the shores of Africa, she charged her with all the love messages and extravagant wishes which proceed from a heart devoured by passion.

One day, while wandering on the beach, she discovered a long vessel, whose elevated prow, bent mast, and triangular sail announced the elegant genius of the Moors. Blanca ran to the port, into which she soon saw the Barbary vessel enter, making the sea foam under her rapid course. A Moor, most superbly dressed, was standing on the prow. Behind him, two black slaves, held by the bridle, an Arabian horse, whose smoking nostrils and scattered mane



indicated both his natural ardour, and the terror with which the noise of the waves affected him. The bark arrives, lowers her sails, touches the pier, and lays to her side ; the Moor springs upon the shore, which re-echoes with the sound of his arms. The slaves disembark the leopard - spotted courser, which neighs and leaps with joy at once more finding himself on land. Other slaves lower, with great care, a basket in which lay an antelope amid

palm tree leaves ; her delicate limbs were fastened and doubled under her, for fear of their being broken by the movement of the vessel ; she wore a collar of aloe beads, and upon the gold plate, which served as a fastening to both ends of the collar, were engraved in Arabic, a name and a talisman.

Blanca recognised Aben-Hamet ; fearful of betraying herself in the presence of the crowd, she retired, and sent

Dorothea, one of her attendants, to inform the Abencerage, that she was waiting for him at the palace of the Moors. Aben-Hamet was at that moment presenting to the governor his firman, written in blue characters on beautiful vellum, and rolled up in a silk case. Dorothea approached, and conducted the happy Aben-Hamet to the feet of Blanca. How great were the transports of the lovers in again meeting, satisfied of each other's fidelity! What happiness in

seeing each other after so long a separation ! How many fresh vows of eternal affection !

The two black slaves bring the Numidian courser, which in place of a saddle, had only a lions' skin thrown over his back and fastened by a purple belt. Afterwards the antelope was introduced. " Sultana," said Aben-Hamet, " this is a roebuck of my country, almost as light as thyself." Blanca, with her own hands, untied the beautiful animal, which seemed

to thank her, by looks of the sweetest expression. During the absence of the Abencerage, the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè had been studying Arabic; she read with tearful eyes, her own name engraved on the antelope's collar. The animal, on being restored to her liberty, could scarcely stand upon her feet, from their having been so long tied up; she laid herself down upon the ground, and leaned her head against the knees of her mistress. Blanca gave her some

fresh dates, and caressed this native of the desert, whose fine coat retained the perfume of the aloe wood and of the rose of Tunis.

The Abencerage, the Duke of Santa-Fè and his daughter departed together for Grenada. The days of the happy lovers passed nearly as those of the preceding year. The same walks, the same regret at the sight of his country, the same love, or rather love always increasing, and always mutual ;

but also the same attachment in the two lovers to the religion of their fathers. “ Become a Christian,” said Blanca;—“ become a Musulman,” said Aben-Hamet. And they separated once more, without giving way to the passion which attracted them to each other.

Aben-Hamet re-appeared the third year, like those birds of passage, which love brings back to our climates in the spring. This time he found not Blanca on the shore ; but a letter from

the object of his adoration informed the faithful Arab of the departure of the Duke for Madrid, and the arrival of Don Carlos at Grenada. The latter was accompanied by a French prisoner, now his friend. The Moor's heart sunk within him at the perusal of this letter. He set out from Malaga for Grenada with the most melancholy forebodings ; the mountains appeared to him frightfully solitary : and he several times turned round to look at the sea which he had just crossed.



Blanca, during her father's absence, had been unable to quit a brother whom she loved, a brother who intended to divest himself of all his property in her favor, and whom she had not seen for seven years. Don Carlos possessed all the courage and all the pride of his country. Terrible as the conquerors of the New World, in whose ranks he had first carried arms; religious like the Spanish knights who conquered the Moors, he cherished in his heart that hatred of the

infidels which he inherited with the blood of the Cid.

Thomas de Lautrec, of the illustrious house of Foix, in which beauty in the females and bravery in the males were regarded as hereditary qualities, was the younger brother of the Countess de Foix, and of the brave and unfortunate Odel de Foix, Lord of Lautrec. At the age of eighteen, Thomas was knighted by Bayard, in that retreat which cost the life of the knight *without fear and*

*without reproach.* Some time after, Thomas was pierced with wounds and made prisoner at Pavia, when defending the chivalrous monarch, who then lost all, except his honor.

Don Carlos de Bivar, who was a witness of the gallantry of Lautrec, had caused the greatest care to be taken of the wounds of the young Frenchman, and there was speedily formed between them one of those heroic friendships, of which esteem and virtue are the foun-

dations. Francis I. had returned to France, but Charles V. detained the other prisoners. Lautrec had had the honor to share his sovereign's captivity, and to lie at his feet in prison. Having remained in Spain, after the departure of his king, he had been given up on his parole, to Don Carlos, who had just brought him to Grenada.

When Aben-Hamet presented himself at the palace of Don Rodrigo, and the door of the

apartment in which was the Duke of Santa-Fè's daughter was opened, the Abencerage experienced torments hitherto unknown to him. At the feet of Donna Blanca was seated a young man, who was looking at her with a species of transport. This young man wore breeches made of buffaloe's skin, and a doublet of the same colour, fastened by a belt from which was suspended a sword with fleurs de lys. A silk mantle was thrown over his shoulders, and he wore a

narrow brimmed hat, shaded with plumes of feathers. A lace ruff, falling back on his bosom, allowed part of his neck to be seen. A pair of mustachoes, black as ebony, gave a masculine and warlike air to a countenance naturally mild. To his large boots, which fell down and doubled over his feet, were attached golden spurs, the marks of the owner's knightly quality.

At some distance, another knight was standing, leaning

on the iron cross of his long sword; he was dressed like his companion, but seemed rather older. His austere look, though at the same time ardent and passionate, inspired respect and awe: the red cross of Calatrava was embroïded on his doublet with this device: *for it and for my king.*

When Blanca first saw Aben-Hamet, she uttered an involuntary scream “Knight,” said she immediately, “this is the infidel of whom I said so much

to you ; take care he does not bear away the victory. The Abencerages were just like him, and they were surpassed by none in loyalty, courage and gallantry."

Don Carlos advanced to meet Aben-Hamet. " Señor Moor," said he, " my father and sister have informed me of your name. They believe you are of a noble and brave race: you are yourself distinguished for your courtesy. My master, Charles V. must soon commence war against



Tunis, and we shall shortly, I hope, meet each other in the field of honor."

Aben-Hamet placed his hand upon his bosom, seated himself upon the ground without answering, and remained with his eyes fixed upon Blanca and upon Lautrec. The latter was admiring, with the curiosity peculiar to his countrymen, the handsome countenance of the Moor, his noble dress and his brilliant armour. Blanca displayed not the slightest em-

barrassment : her soul was completely exhibited in her eyes ; the ingenuous Spaniard made no attempt to conceal the secret of her heart. After a silence of a few moments, Aben - Hamet rose, made his bow to the daughter of Don Rodrigo, and retired. Astonished at the behaviour of the Moor, and at the looks of Blanca, Lautrec left the apartment, with a suspicion which was speedily changed into certainty.

Don Carlos remained alone

with his sister, "Blanca," said he,  
 "explain yourself. Whence this  
 trouble which the sight of this  
 stranger has occasioned you?"

"Brother," answered Blanca,  
 "I love Aben-Hamet, and if  
 he will become a Christian, my  
 hand is his."

"What!" exclaimed Don  
 Carlos, "you love Aben-Ha-  
 met! the daughter of the Bi-  
 vars love a Moor, an infidel,  
 an enemy, whom we have driven  
 from these palaces!"

“Don Carlos,” replied Blanca, “I love Aben - Hamet ; Aben - Hamet loves me ; for three years he has renounced me, sooner than renounce the religion of his forefathers. He possesses nobility, honour and knighthood : to my last breath I will adore him.”

Don Carlos was capable of estimating, in its fullest extent, the generous resolution of Aben-Hamet, although he lamented the infatuation of this infidel. “Unfortunate Blanca,” said he, “whi-

ther will this passion lead thee ! I had hoped that my friend Laurec would become my brother."

"Thou deceivedst thyself," said Blanca, "I cannot love that stranger. As to my feelings for Aben-Hamet, I am accountable to no one: keep thy knightly vows, as I shall keep my vows of love. For thy comfort, be assured of this, that Blanca will never become the wife of an infidel."

"Our family will then disap-

pear from the earth," said Don Carlos.

"It is thy business to revive it," said Blanca, "besides, of what consequence are sons whom thou wilt never see, and who will degenerate from thy virtues? Don Carlos, I know that we are the last of our race; we are too much out of the common order to expect that our blood should flourish after us. The Cid was our ancestor: he will be our posterity;" so saying she quitted the apartment.

Don Carlos flew to the Abencerage. "Moor, renounce my sister, or meet me in single combat."

"Art thou intrusted by thy sister," said Aben-Hamet, "to reclaim the vows which she has made to me?"

"No," replied Don Carlos, "she loves thee more than ever."

"Ah! worthy brother of Blanca!" exclaimed Aben-Hamet, interrupting him, "I must

derive all my happiness from thy noble blood! O fortunate Aben-Hamet! O happy day! I believed that Blanca was unfaithful for this French knight. . . .”

“That is thy misfortune!” exclaimed Don Carlos in his turn, “Lautrec is my friend; but for thee, he would be my brother. You must give me satisfaction for the tears which you make my family shed.”

“I am contented to do so,”



answered Aben-Hamet, “ but although I am sprung from an ancient family, which has probably combated thine, I am not a knight. I see no one here to confer upon me that order, which will allow thee to measure thy strength with mine, without degrading thy rank.”

Struck with the Moor’s observation, Don Carlos looked at him with a mixture of admiration and rage. Then all at once, “ I myself will dub thee knight ! thou art worthy of it.”

Aben-Hamet bent his knee to Don Carlos. The latter gave him the accolade, by striking him three times on the shoulder with the flat side of his sword; afterwards, he girded on him the same sword which the Abencerage, perhaps, was about to plunge into his bosom. Such was ancient honour.

Both of them immediately sprung upon their coursers, got beyond the walls of Grenada, and flew to the fountain of the Pine. The duels between the

Moors and Christians had for a long time, given celebrity to this spring. It was there that Malek Alabes had fought with Ponce de Leon, and the grand master of Calatrava had killed the brave Abayados. The fragments of the armour of this Moorish knight were still seen suspended from the branches of the Pine, and on the bark of the tree some letters of a funeral inscription were still legible. Don Carlos pointed out with his hand, to the Abencerage, the tomb of Abayados “Imitate,”

said he to him, "that brave infidel, and receive baptism and death from my hand."

"Death perhaps," answered Aben-Hamet, "but Allah and the Prophet for ever!"

They immediately proceeded to take their ground, and rushed against each other with fury. They were only provided with swords: Aben-Hamet was much less skilful than Don Carlos in combat, but the excellence of his sword, which had been tempered

at Damascus, and the fleetness of his Arabian steed, gave him an advantage over his enemy. He gave the reins to his courser in the Moorish manner, and with his large sharp stirrup, cut the right leg of Don Carlos's horse under the knee. The wounded animal fell to the ground, and Don Carlos, dismounted by this fortunate blow, marched against Aben-Hamet, bearing his sword aloft. Aben-Hamet sprung to the ground, and met Don Carlos with intrepidity; he warded off the

first blows of the Spaniard, who broke his sword against the Damascus blade ; twice disappointed by fortune, Don Carlos shed tears of rage, and called out to his enemy : “ Strike, Moor, strike ; Don Carlos, although disarmed, defies thee, thee, and all thy infidel race.”

“ Thou mightest have slain me,” replied the Abencerage, “ but I never thought of giving thee the slightest wound. I only wished to prove to thee that I was worthy of being thy

brother, and to prevent thee from despising me."

At that instant, they perceived a cloud of dust: it was Lautrec and Blanca, who were spurring on two mares of Fez, fleetier than the wind. On arriving at the fountain of the Pine, they saw the combat suspended.

"I am vanquished," said Don Carlos, "this knight has given me my life. Lautrec, you will perhaps be more fortunate than me?"

“ My wounds,” replied Lautrec, in a noble and dignified tone of voice, “ allow me to decline the combat with this courteous knight. I have no wish,” added he, with a blush, “ to learn the subject of your quarrel, or to penetrate a secret which would probably be a death blow to myself; my absence will speedily cause peace to be restored between you, at least unless it be Blanca’s orders that I should remain at her feet.”



“ Sir knight,” said Blanca, “ you must remain with my brother : you must look upon me as your sister. The hearts of all present are suffering deeply ; you will learn from us to bear the ills of life.”

Blanca wished to constrain the three knights to shake each other’s hands ; all three refused to do so. “ I hate Aben-Hamet,” exclaimed Don Carlos. “ I envy him,” said Lautrec. “ And I,” said the Abence-

rage, “ I esteem Don Carlos, and I pity Lautrec ; but I can love neither of them.”

“ Let us continue to see each other,” said Blanca, “ and sooner or later friendship will follow esteem. Let the fatal event which has brought us here, be for ever unknown at Grenada.”

From that moment Aben-Hamet became a thousand times dearer to the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè : love

delights in valour. Nothing was now wanting to the Abencerage, since he had shewn himself brave, and Don Carlos owed his life to him. Aben-Hamet, by the advice of Blanca, abstained from appearing at the palace for several days, to allow the wrath of Don Carlos time to cool. A mixture of mild and bitter feelings filled the soul of Aben-Hamet; if, on the one hand, the certainty of being loved with so much fidelity and ardour was to him an inexhaustible source of de-

light; on the other, the certainty of never being happy without renouncing the religion of his fathers, weighed heavily on his courage. Years had already elapsed without bringing any relief to his sufferings: should he see the rest of his life pass away in the same manner?

He was plunged into an abyss of the most serious and tender reflexions, when one evening, he heard the bell ringing for that christian prayer

which announces the close of the day. It struck him that he would enter into the temple of the God of Blanca, and ask further counsel of the Master of Nature.

He sets out; he arrives at the gate of an ancient mosque, which had been converted into a church by the faithful. With a heart pierced by sorrow and feelings of devotion, he penetrated into the temple which was formerly that of his God and of his country. Prayers

were just ended : there was no longer any one in the church. A holy obscurity prevailed amid the multitude of columns, which resembled the trunks of trees of a regularly planted forest. The light architecture of the Arabs was here married to the gothic architecture, and, without losing any thing of its elegance, it had assumed a gravity better adapted to meditation. A few lamps scarcely gave light to the hollows of the vaults ; but, by the brightness of several lighted tapers, the

altar of the sanctuary was still conspicuous : it glittered with gold and precious stones. The Spaniards glory in stripping themselves of their riches, in order to decorate with them the objects of their worship ; and the image of the living God, placed in the midst of lace veils, of crowns of pearls, and bunches of rubies, receives the adoration of a half naked people.

Not a seat was to be seen in the whole extent of this vast area : a marble pavement, which

served as a covering to the coffins, served the great as well as the little, to prostrate themselves before the Lord. Aben-Hamet walked slowly up the deserted naves, which re-echoed with the solitary noise of his footsteps. His mind was divided between the recollections which this ancient edifice of the Moorish religion recalled to his memory, and the feelings to which the religion of Christians gave birth in his heart. He distinguished at the foot of a column, a motionless figure,



which he at first mistook for a statue on a tomb. On approaching it, he distinguished a young knight on his knees, with his forehead reverently bent, and his arms crossed upon his bosom. This knight made not the slightest movement at the noise of Aben - Hamet's steps ; no mental wandering, no external sign of life disturbed his deep prayer ; his sword was laid on the ground before him, and his plumed hat was placed by his side on the marble : he had the appearance

of being fixed in that attitude from the effect of some enchantment. Aben-Hamet recognized Lautrec. “ Ah !” said he to himself, “ this young and handsome Frenchman is asking some signal favour of heaven ; this warrior, so celebrated for his courage, is here laying his heart bare to the Sovereign of Heaven, as the humblest and the most obscure of men ! Let me also pray to the God of knights and of glory.”

Aben-Hamet was about to

prostrate himself upon the marble, when he perceived, by the glimmering of a lamp, some Arabic characters and a verse of the Koran, which appeared upon a half ruined tablet. His heart again felt the pangs of remorse ; and he made haste to quit a building in which he had entertained the idea of becoming a traitor to his religion and his country.

The cemetery which surrounded this ancient mosque was a species of garden, planted

with orange, cypress and palm trees, and watered by two fountains ; a cloister went all round it. Aben-Hamet, in passing under one of the porticoes, perceived a female about to enter the church. Although she was wrapped up in a veil, the Abencerage recognized the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè ; he stopped her, and said to her : “ Dost thou come to seek Lautrec in this temple ? ”

“ Dismiss this vulgar jealousy,” replied Blanca, “ if I

no longer loved thee, I would tell thee so : I would scorn to deceive thee. I come here to pray for thee. Thou alone art now the object of my wishes. I forget the concerns of my own soul for thine. Thou shouldst not have intoxicated me with the poison of thy love, or thou shouldst have consented to serve the God whom I serve. Thou disturbest my whole family ; my brother hates thee, my father is overwhelmed with vexation, because I refuse to marry. Dost thou not see how much

my health suffers? Behold this enchanted asylum of death: here I shall soon be laid, if thou dost not hasten to receive my vows at the foot of the Christian altar. The struggles which I endure are gradually undermining my existence; the passion with which thou hast inspired me, will not always support this feeble frame. Remember, oh Moor, to speak to thee in thy own language, that the flame which lights the torch, is also the fire which consumes it."

So saying, Blanca entered the church, and left Aben-Hamet confounded with her last words.

The struggle is ended ; the Abencerage is vanquished ; he is about to renounce the errors of his faith ; he has struggled long enough ; the dread of seeing Blanca perish triumphs over every other feeling in the breast of Aben-Hamet. "After all," said he to himself, " perhaps the God of the Christians is the true

God? This God is always the deity of noble souls, since he is the God of Blanca, of Don Carlos, and of Lautrec."

Full of this idea, Aben-Hamet waited with impatience for the following day, to inform Blanca of his resolution, and to convert a life of sorrow and of tears into one of joy and happiness; he was unable, however, to repair to the palace of the Duke until the evening. He learned that Blanca was gone with her brother to the Generalife,



where Lautrec was giving an entertainment to his friend's sister. Agitated by fresh suspicions, Aben-Hamet flies upon the traces of Blanca. Lautrec blushed at seeing the Abencerage appear so suddenly ; as to Don Carlos, he received the Moor with cool politeness, through which esteem was perceptible.

Lautrec had caused a collation to be served up of the finest fruits of Spain and of Africa, in one of the apartments

of the Generalife, stiled the *Hall of the Knights*. All round this hall were suspended the portraits of the princes and knights, who had conquered the Moors,—of Pelayo, the Cid, Gonzalvo de Cordova; and the sword of the last king of Grenada was hung under these portraits. Aben-Hamet did not allow the internal pain which he felt to appear, and only thought, like the lion in the fable, on looking at these portraits, “ We know not how to paint.”

The generous Lautrec, who saw the eyes of the Abencerage turned involuntarily towards the sword of Boabdil, said to him, " Knight of the Moors, had I anticipated the honor of your presence at this fete, I would not have received you here. One loses a sword every day, and I have seen the bravest of monarchs deliver up his to his fortunate enemy."

" Ah !" exclaimed the Moor, hiding his face with a corner of

his robe, “ one might lose it like Francis I., but like Boabdil. . . . ”

As night came on, lights were brought, and the conversation took another turn. Don Carlos was requested to relate the discovery of Mexico. He spoke of that unknown world with the pompous eloquence, which is peculiar to the Spanish nation. He related the misfortunes of Montezuma, the manners of the Americans, the prodigies of Spanish valour, and even the

cruelties of his countrymen, which did not, in his eyes, seem to deserve either praise or blame. These narratives delighted Aben-Hamet, whose passion for the marvellous betrayed his Arabian blood. When it came to his turn, he gave a picture of the Ottoman empire, newly established on the ruins of Constantinople, bestowing a tribute of passing regret to the first empire of Mahomet; the happy days when the Commander of the True Believers saw shining around him Zobeïde,

Flower of Beauty, Strength of Hearts, Tempest and the generous Ganem, the Slave for Love. As to Lautrec, he painted the gallant court of Francis the First, the arts reviving from the midst of barbarism, the honor, the loyalty, the chivalry of the 'olden time,' joined to the politeness of civilized ages, the Gothic turrets ornamented with the Grecian orders, and the French ladies setting off their rich dresses with Athenian elegance.

After this conversation, Lautrec, wishing to amuse the divinity of the entertainment, took his guitar, and sang this romance\* which he had composed to one of the mountain airs of his country :

Oft to my birth place, mem'ry's glance  
Will turn, and my wrapt soul entrance !  
Sister, how sweet the minutes rolled

in France ;

My country ! thee more dear I hold  
Than gold.

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\* The public is already acquainted with this romance. I composed the words for an air of the mountains of Auvergne, remarkable for its sweetness and simplicity.

## 161

Rememberest thou how to her breast  
Our mother both her children prest,  
And how her bright white locks would glisten ?

How blest !

While we with lips of love, sweet sister, !

Kiss'd her.

Rememb'rest thou that castle dear,  
By which the swift stream flowed ; and near,  
That Moorish tow'r, with age so worn,

From which

The trumpet sounded when the morn

Was born.

Rememb'rest thou that tranquil lake  
Which the swift swallow skimmed to slake  
His thirst ; where zephyr the sweet rose

Would shake ;

And Sol's last rays at evening's close

Repose.



Rememb'rest thou that friend belov'd  
 Who my heart's; tend'rest passion moved ;  
 As, to pluck flowrets sweet and fine,  
                   She rov'd,  
 Helen did her fond heart on mine  
                   Recline.

Oh ! who my Helen back will yield,  
 My native hill, my oak-crowned field ?  
 Their mem'ry keeps my heart-wounds old  
                   Unhealed ;  
 My country ! thee more dear I hold  
                   Than gold.

As he finished the last couplet, Lautrec, with his glove, brushed away the tear which the recollection of the gentle land of France extorted from

him. The regret of the handsome prisoner was warmly participated by Aben-Hamet, who deplored as well as Lautrec, the loss of his country. When requested to take the guitar in his turn, he excused himself, by saying that he only knew one romance, which would not be at all agreeable to Christian ears.

“ If it is a song of the infidels smarting under our victories,” said Don Carlos scorn-

Grenada's town  
Before him lay,  
With sudden start,  
"Fair town," said he,  
"My hand and heart  
I give to thee.

"Thee will I wive,  
And to thee will  
Cordova give,  
And proud Seville.  
Robes rich and fair,  
And jewels fine,  
Shall all declare  
My love is thine."

Grenada cried,  
"Great Leon's king!  
I'm the Moor's bride,  
I wear his ring.

Then keep thy own ;  
The gems I wear  
Are a gorgeous zone,  
And children dear."

Thou promis'd'st thus,  
But kep'st not well.  
Oh woe for us!  
Grenada fell.  
A Christian base,  
Abencerage,  
Rules thy birth place ;  
T'was in Fate's page.

To that tomb ne'er,  
The pool so near,  
Shall camel bear  
Medina's seer.  
A Christian base,  
Abencerage,

Rules thy birth place ;  
T'was in Fate's page.

Alhambra's tow'rs !  
Palace of God !  
'Town of fair flow'rs  
And fountains broad !  
A Christian base,  
Abencerage,  
Rules thy birth place ;  
T'was in Fate's page.

The plaintive artlessness of this ballad affected even the proud Don Carlos, notwithstanding the imprecations it pronounced against the Christians. He would have wished to be

excused from singing himself, but out of courtesy to Lautrec, he felt obliged to yield to his intreaties. Aben-Hamet handed the guitar to Blanca's brother, who thus celebrated the exploits of the Cid, his illustrious ancestor.\*

\* All the world knows the air of the *Follies of Spain*. This air had no words, at least none which expressed its grave, religious and chivalrous character. This character I have endeavoured to give in the romance of the Cid. This romance, having got into the hands of the public without my consent, some celebrated masters did me the honor to set it to music.

Bright in his mail, with love and valour fired,  
 The Cid, about to part for Afric's war,  
 Stretched at Ximena's feet, as love inspired,  
 Thus sung his parting to the sweet guitar :

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But, as I had expressly composed it for the air of the *Follies of Spain*, the fourth stanza of it becomes complete nonsense, unless reference is had to my original intention. Finally, these three romances have little other merit than their adaptation to three old airs of undoubted nationality : besides this, they bring on the denouement of the story.\*

\* *Note by the Translator.*—It was the wish of the publishers to have given the original music of these three airs ; but they were unable to procure more than the first. The translations are made in the same measure as the originals ; for these the translator is indebted to the kindness of two friends.

“ My love hath said : Go forth and meet the  
Moor,

Return victorious from the well fought field ;  
Yes ! I shall then believe thou canst adore,  
If, at my wish, thy love to honor yield !”

“ Then give to me my helmet and my spear !  
In bloody fight the Cid his love shall prove,  
Amidst the din of war the Moor shall hear  
His battle cry, My honor and my love !”

O gallant Moor, vaunt not thy tuneful strain,  
My song shall be a nobler theme than thine,  
Ere long 'twill become the folly of Spain,  
As one where love with honor doth combine.

Oft in my native vallies shall be heard  
In the old Christians' mouth Rodrigo's name,  
Who nobly to inglorious life preferred  
His God, his king, his honor, and his flame.



Don Carlos appeared so proud in singing these words, in a masculine and sonorous voice, that he might have been taken for the Cid himself. Lautrec shared the warlike enthusiasm of his friend; but the Abencerage turned pale at the name of the Cid.

“ This knight,” said he, “ whom the Christians denominated the Flower of Battles, bears with us the name of the Cruel. Had his generosity but equalled his valour. . . .”

“ His generosity,” said Don Carlos, interrupting Aben-Hamet, warmly, “ was even greater than his courage, and none but a Moor would calumniate the hero to whom my family owes its birth.”

“ What sayest thou?” exclaimed Aben-Hamet, springing up from the seat on which he lay half reclined: “ dost thou reckon the Cid among thy ancestors?”

“ His blood flows in my

veins," replied Don Carlos, "and I recognise my possession of it, by the hatred with which my heart burns against the foes of my God."

"It follows then," said Aben-Hamet, looking at Blanca, "that you belong to the family of the Bivars which, after the conquest of Grenada, invaded the possessions of the unfortunate Abencerages, and put to death an ancient knight of that name, who attempted to

defend the tombs of his forefathers."

" Moor !" exclaimed Don Carlos, inflamed with rage, " know that I do not suffer myself to be interrogated. If I now possess the spoils of the Abencerages, my ancestors acquired them at the price of their blood, and to their sword only do they owe them."

" Only one word more," said Aben-Hamet, with constantly increasing emotion ; " we knew

not in our exile that the Bivars had the title of Santa-Fe, and it was this which was the cause of my error."

"It was on the same Bivar," answered Don Carlos, "who conquered the Abencerages, that this title was conferred by Ferdinand the Catholic."

The head of Aben-Hamet declined upon his bosom ; he remained standing in the midst of Don Carlos, Lautrec and

Blanca, who looked at him with astonishment. Two floods of tears gushed from his eyes upon the poignard which was fastened to his girdle. "Pardon me," he said, "men ought not, I know, to shed tears; from this time mine will no longer flow externally, although I have many more to shed: listen to me.

"Blanca! my love for thee equals the burning winds of Arabia. I was conquered: I could no longer live without

thee. But yesterday the sight of this French knight at his prayers, and thy words in the cemetery of the temple, made me resolve to know thy God, and to pledge thee my faith."

A movement of joy from Blanca, and of surprise from Don Carlos, interrupted Aben-Hamet ; Lautrec covered his face with both hands. The Moor divined his thoughts, and shaking his head with an agonizing smile, said, " Knight,

lose not all hope ; as to thee,  
Blanca, weep for ever over the  
last Abencerage."

Blanca, Don Carlos and Lautrec, all three lifted up their hands to heaven, and exclaimed,  
" The last Abencerage !"

There was a moment of silence ; fear, hope, hatred, love, astonishment and jealousy agitated their different hearts : Blanca shortly fell upon her knees : " Gracious God ! thou



hast justified my choice ; I  
could only love the descendant  
of heroes !”

“ Sister !” said the irritated  
Don Carlos, “ you forget that  
you are here in the presence of  
Lautrec.”

“ Don Carlos,” said Aben-  
Hamet, “ suspend thy wrath ;  
it is my business to restore thee  
to repose.” Then, addressing  
himself to Blanca, who had  
again taken her seat :

“ Houri of heaven, Genie of love and of beauty, Aben-Hamet will be thy slave to his latest breath ; but hear the full extent of his misfortune. The old man who was immolated by thy ancestor, while defending his home, was the father of my father ; learn also a secret which I concealed from thee, or rather which thou madest me forget. When I came for the first time to visit this sorrowful country, my first object was to find out some descendant of the Bivars whom I might call

to account for the blood which his fathers had shed."

"Well then," said Blanca, in a voice of grief, but sustained by the accent of a great soul, "what is thy resolution?"

"The only one which is worthy of thee," answered Aben-Hamet, "to restore thee thy vows, to satisfy by my eternal absence, and by my death, what we both of us owe to the enmity of our Gods, of our countries, and of our families.

Should my image ever be blotted out from thy heart ; if time, which destroys every thing, should erase from thy memory the recollection of Aben-Hamet. . . . this French knight. . . . Thou owest this sacrifice to thy brother.”

Lautrec started up impetuously, and threw himself into the arms of the Moor. “ Aben-Hamet, think not to outdo me in generosity ; I am a Frenchman ; I was knighted by Bayard ; I have shed my blood for

my king ; I will be like my sponsor and my prince, without fear and without reproach. Shouldst thou remain with us, I will intreat Don Carlos to bestow upon thee the hand of his sister ; if thou quittest Grenada, never shall thy mistress be troubled with a whisper of my love. Thou shalt not carry with thee into thy exile, the fatal idea that Lautrec was insensible to thy virtues, and sought to take advantage of thy misfortune.”

And the young knight pressed the Moor to his bosom with the warmth and vivacity of a Frenchman.

“Knights,” said Don Carlos in his turn, “I expected nothing less from the illustrious races to which ye belong. Aben-Hamet, by what mark can I recognize you for the last Abencerage?”

“By my conduct,” replied Aben-Hamet.

“I admire it, undoubtedly,”

said the Spaniard, “ but, before I explain myself, shew me some proof of your birth.”

Aben-Hamet took from his bosom the hereditary ring of the Abencerages, which he wore suspended from a golden chain.

At sight of this, Don Carlos stretched out his hand to the unfortunate Aben-Hamet. “ Sir knight,” said he, “ I regard you as a man of honor, and the real descendant of kings. You honour me by your plans con-

nected with my family ; I accept the combat which you came privately to seek. If I am conquered, all my property, which formerly belonged to your family, shall be faithfully restored to you. If you have renounced this plan, accept in turn the offer which I make to you : become a Christian, and receive the hand of my sister, which Lautrec has solicited for you."

The temptation was great ; but resistance to it was not



beyond the strength of Aben-Hamet. If all powerful love pleaded strongly in the heart of the Abencerage ; on the other hand, he could not think but with terror of uniting the blood of the persecutors with that of the persecuted. He fancied he saw the shade of his ancestor rising from the tomb, and reproaching him with this sacrilegious alliance. With a heart torn by grief, Aben-Hamet exclaimed : “ Ah ! why do I here meet with souls so sublime, characters so generous, to make

me feel more bitterly the value of what I lose ! Let Blanca pronounce ; let *her* say what I must do, in order to render myself more worthy of her love !”

“ Return to the desert !” was the exclamation of Blanca, who immediately sunk to the earth in a swoon.

Aben-Hamet prostrated himself, adored Blanca even more than heaven, and departed without uttering a word. The

same night he set out for Malaga, and took his passage on board a vessel which was to touch at Oran. Near that city he found the caravan encamped, which leaves Morocco every three years, crosses Africa, repairs to Egypt, and rejoins the caravan of Mecca in Arabia. Aben-Hamet joined it as one of the pilgrims.

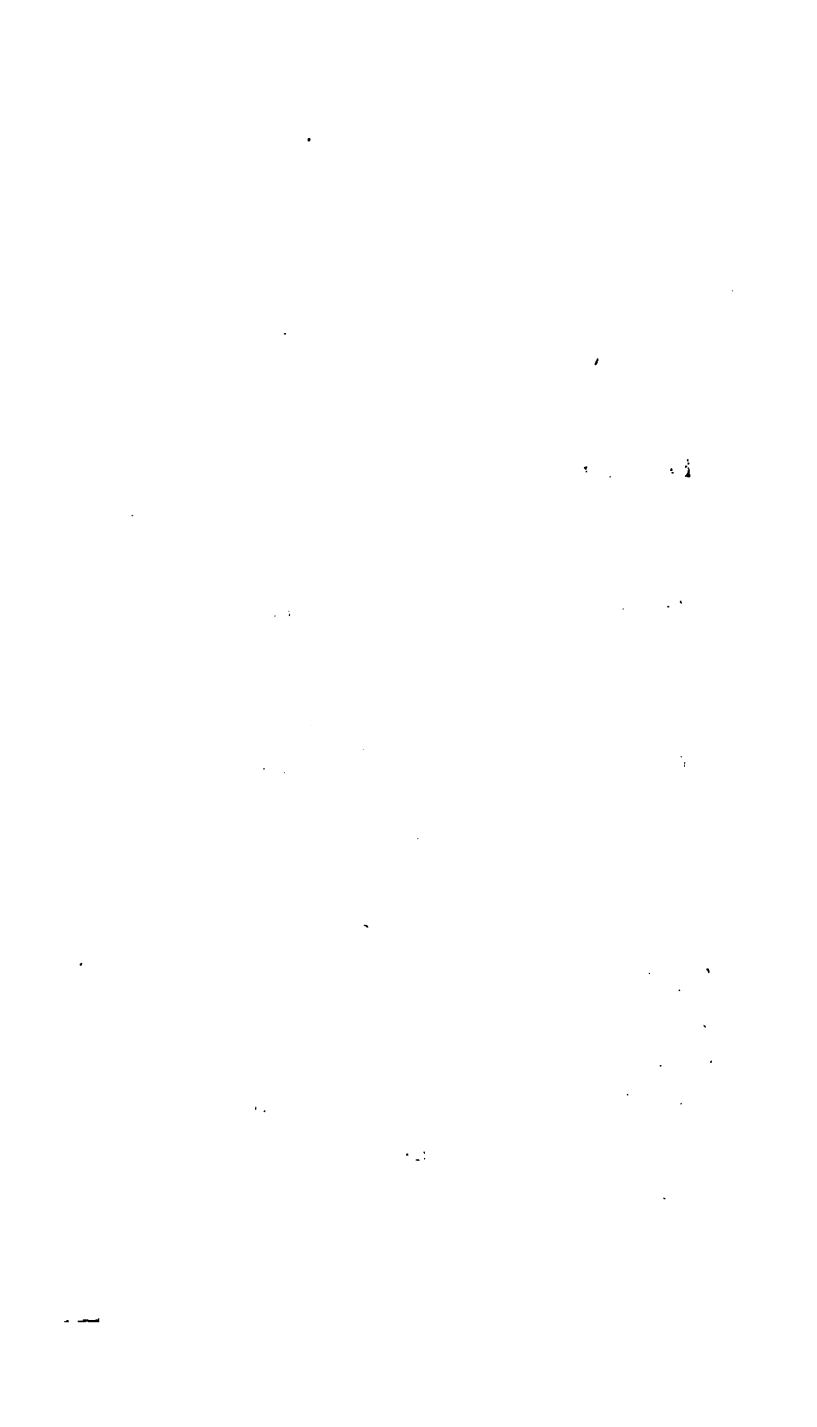
Blanca's life was at first considered to be in danger, but she recovered. Faithful to the promise which he had given to

the Abencerage, Lautrec departed, and never did a word of his love or his sorrow trouble the melancholy of the daughter of the Duke of Santa-Fè. Every year Blanca made a journey to Malaga, to wander on the mountains, at the period when her lover was accustomed to return from Africa ; she seated herself upon the rocks, contemplated the sea, and the vessels in the distance, and afterwards returned to Grenada. The rest of her life she passed amid the ruins of the Al-

hambra. She complained not ; she wept not ; she never spoke of Aben-Hamet ; a stranger to her would have thought her happy. She was the only survivor of her family. Her father died of grief, and Don Carlos was killed in a duel, in which Lautrec acted as his second. What was the fate of Aben-Hamet no one ever knew.

In leaving Tunis, by the gate which leads to the ruins of Carthage, the traveller finds a cemetery ; under a palm tree,

in a corner of this cemetery, a tomb was pointed out to me, which was called *the tomb of the last Abencerage*. There is nothing remarkable about it; the sepulchral stone is perfectly smooth; only, after a Moorish fashion, a slight hole has been excavated in the middle of it by the chisel. The rain water which collects in the bottom of this funeral cup, serves, in a burning climate, to quench the thirst of the birds of heaven.



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\* Historical and Political Essay on Revolutions.

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\* The first volume of this edition will be preceded by a new preface on the present state of Greece, which will give the *Itinerary* the merit of a work specially written for the occasion.

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